8

The Chinese druggists, many of whom stocked among their traditional pharmacopeia a few modern medications, gave out occasionally to their customers information derived from the manufacturer's instructions for use. People with minor indispositions sometimes sought a druggist's advice. He suggested traditional or modern remedies, depending on the wishes of the customer. Thus, the druggists also acted as a bridge to the use of modern remedies.

Facets of Social Life Pertinent to Childbearing:

Communication and Transportation

People went to Minburī, and less often to Bangkok, to buy, sell, work, or visit relatives. A few adults had never been outside Bang Chan.

Along the road buses passed Bang Chan every two or three hours during the daytime only. Minburī was a ten minute ride, Bangkok, an hour. Minburī had no taxis, and no telephone existed to call a taxi from Bangkok. Two or three persons owned bicycles.

Within Bang Chan, transportation varied with the season. From June to February travel was entirely by boat, even to a neighbor. A message to a local midwife, for instance, could be carried quickly by a speedy paddler in his skiff. If an emergency trip to the Minburī Health Center appeared necessary, a person could be rowed fairly comfortably along the canal that bordered the road. Going by boat to Bangkok, a whole day's row away, or four hours by the motor boat from Minburī, was not considered convenient even for passenger traffic, much less for a sick person or a woman in labor.

The inconvenient time of year was the three month dry season. Boats then could hardly go on the canal that ran through the middle of Bang Chan, while the smaller canals became muddy or even dry. Walking barefoot over sharp stubble in tropical sun was hard. To transport a woman in labor, assuming she could stand it, an improvised stretcher could be made, but to subject her to the jolting bus was usually foolhardy. It was not customary to flag down passing cars. If things went wrong for a woman in labor during the hot, dry season, there was practically no chance of getting her to a hospital, and none of getting modern help to her.

Work Habits in the Economy

Because of the annual flood the land was admirably suited to growing a single bounteous crop of rice. After all needs for

Bangkok. The tropical monsoon climate divides the year into three seasons, a hot, wet season from late May to November, a cooler, dry season from December to early February, and a hot, dry season from late February to mid-May. The community, scattered over an area of approximately five square miles, was composed of seven neighboring hamlets. In 1954, the population was approximately 1700, divided among 336 households. About 60 per cent of the households were made up of independent families, parents with unmarried children, with an average family size of 5.7 persons. The main occupation of 80 per cent of all families was rice farming.

The climate together with the overflowing Chao Phraya river, provided natural conditions for raising a single crop of wet rice. From May or June to February, the principal activities were those connected with rice production. This crop greatly exceeded the needs for local consumption as human food, feed, and seed. The surplus of rice which was sold, was estimated for 1953 as 1.4 times the amount used for all purposes within the village (Janlekha, 1955).

Wat Bang Chan, the Buddhist monastery and place for religious exercises, was also the center of social life in the community. When data for this study were being gathered, the one primary school in the village was located on the grounds of the wat. The community was defined simply by the clientele which patronized Wat Bang Chan and this elementary school. Within the area of the community lived a small minority of Thai Moslems who patronized a mosque and school just outside Bang Chan. The few Chinese in the village were considered as part of the Thai-Buddhist community. Information to be presented on food habits refers primarily to habits of the Buddhist majority, although some reference will be made to ways in which Moslem practices differed therefrom.

Although for six or more months of the year the fields were covered with water, sometimes to a depth of a meter or more, a year-round road, connecting Bangkok and Minburi, the nearest market town, ran through one edge of the village. Bus service was available along this road, to either Bangkok or Minburi but within the community one went by boat on the network of canals during the wet season, and during the dry season, on foot along the dikes or across fields. From late January through May, when subsidiary canals were apt to be dry, getting about was somewhat difficult. Boat travel was considered easy, but as many families had only one boat, a trip to the store or even to a neighbor's home had to be planned with reference to the activities of other family members.

Large scale purchases, as for a ceremony, were always made at a big market, but in general, instead of people going to the market-town, the "market" came to the people. Boat-venders brought not only fresh produce and staples but also sweets, ices, soft drinks, and cooked foods such as Chinese

4:Phillips E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1966
AO7 Central Thai AO7
Bang Chan

Houses in the village vary considerably in appearance: from the bamboo and thatch dwellings of the poorest families to the sturdy, great gabled houses of teak built by Bang Chan's original settlers to the tiled and corrugated iron-roofed homes of the newly rich. Most, however, follow the traditional Siamese pattern of being built on posts two to ten feet off the ground, mainly as a protection against flood waters. Many homes in Bang Chan give the impression of being permanently unfinished, the bamboo houses because they require constant refurbishment, the wooden dwellings because they are made of teak which seasons best when left untreated and exposed directly to the elements. The merging upper-class urban pattern of painting teakwood has not yet reached Bang Chan.

The major thoroughfare of the community, bisecting it in a north-south direction and perpendicular to the Bangkok-Minburi highway, is Khlɔɔŋ (or Canal) Bang Chan, which links with Khlɔɔŋ Sɛɛn Sɛɛb three kilometers south of the village. The latter, dug in the 1840's and originally intended as a military route to the Cambodian frontier, is one of several major canals dug during the mid-nineteenth century as part of the vast canal system that was constructed in the Central Plain when the region was opened for commercial rice production. Together with the highway built since World War II, a one-hour bus ride to the capital, Khlɔɔŋ Sɛɛn Sɛɛb, provides the villagers with their major access to Bangkok and the rest of the Central Plain. By motorboat a trip to Bangkok via this large, bustling canal takes approximately three hours.

Despite these relatively good communications facilities and the long-standing Thai peasant tradition to *paj thiaw* ("to go around"—for fun, on visits, pilgrimages, often for long distances) few people outside the immediate vicinity of the village have ever heard of Bang Chan. The community is neither a landmark nor is it located near one; it is not famed for any activities (other than having become the research site for the "American professors"); and because it is not a spatially integrated village, Bang Chan cannot even be found on any map of Thailand. Like most Thai settlements, Bang Chan has a Buddhist monastery and a government elementary school. It is these two structures that give the village its identity and the local people a sense of belonging to a community. People say that they live "at home in Bang Chan" because they make their merit at the monastery of Bang Chan and send their children to the Bang Chan school. Approximately five square miles in size and inhabited by 1,771 people living in 296 households (1956 village census), Bang Chan seems in physical appearance and social significance like the thousands of other communities that dot the rice fields of the great Central Plain.

To what extent Bang Chan may be considered "typical" in an analytic sense of other villages of the Mɛɛnaam Valley, or even of the country as a

4:Phillips E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1966
AO7 Central Thai AO7
Bang Chan

423 184 from Bang Chan, the figure is as high as 85 percent (Dobby 1950). In these terms, therefore, it is best to view the incidence of land tenancy in Bang Chan as largely a function of local, historical circumstances.

369 177 A final word should be said about Bang Chan's proximity and accessibility to Bangkok—the cornucopia of so much that is new, interesting, and desirable (if somewhat equivocally) to most Siamese peasants. It is clear that Bang Chan's closeness to the capital creates certain conditions that would not be present in a community situated, for example, 200 kilometers, instead of 31 kilometers, from the nation's largest city. Simply on practical grounds, this nearness to the city permits the villagers to take advantage of opportunities—economic, recreational, and religious—which those living in distant provinces can obtain only after serious consideration of the financial and psychological expenses involved: "Do I have shoes to wear in the city? Do they treat people from the provinces well? With whom will I stay? Do I have the train fare?" A Bang Chaner who visits the capital [494] does not have to make such financial or emotional commitments, since it is only a one hour, three and one-half baht (seventeen and one-half cents) bus ride back home, although many do share with their up-country cousins the peasant's apprehensions about city manners.

The attractions of Bangkok take several forms: off-season jobs, medical care, kinship ties, special schools, great market places, famed monasteries or fairs, and the many other places where one can go to have fun. A survey [484] conducted in Bang Chan during 1955 (Goldsen and Ralis 1957) indicates that 62 percent of all household heads in the village visited Bangkok more than twice during the year for just such purposes. (Twenty-one percent had not gone to Bangkok at all, and 23 percent had gone more than ten times.) Many villagers, particularly younger men, attracted by the promise 369 177 of regular wages, lighter work, and the bright lights of the city, leave Bang 167 Chan with the hope that they will never have to return, although of course [464] many do. The Goldsen-Ralis survey reveals that 26 percent of their re- [701] spondents had lived in Bangkok for a year or more, although for most this was in fulfillment of military service.

369 177 181 Living in Bangkok is not something that is desired in and of itself. Bang Chaners are keenly aware of the disadvantages of city living—particularly its great expense and insecurity—and are impressed only by those individuals who have made a success out of their urban sojourn. Most would agree that a Bangkok coolie, for all his exposure to the wonders of the modern world, lives a considerably less attractive life than they do.

369 177 The frequent transit between Bang Chan and Bangkok,[8] however,

[209] [204] [871] [8] Of less practical consequence than their direct personal experiences and word-of-mouth contacts, but not to be ignored, are the villagers' contacts with Bangkok by way of radio, newspapers, books, and of course by way of what their children bring

TABLE 16. INHABITANTS WHO HAVE ADOPTED URBAN EATING PATTERNS ARE MORE LIKELY THAN OTHERS TO BE EXPOSED TO MASS COMMUNICATIONS AND URBAN CONTACTS

	Eating Pattern	
	With hands (242)	With fork and/or spoon (84)
Listens to radio		
Regularly (daily)	10%	23%
Occasionally	17	28
Seldom	51	35
Never	22	10
Has seen a movie		
Ten times or more	40%	72%
4 - 9 times	19	17
1 - 3 times	28	10
Never	13	1
This past year, how many times did you go to Bangkok?		
None	26%	7%
Once	18	15
2 - 4 times	29	23
5 or more times	28	55

When acceptance of urban influences is measured even on the basis of this index, the evidence is clear that it is linked with acceptance of the agricultural innovations. Those responsive to urban influence are twice as likely as others to use fertiliser (21 per cent versus 9 per cent), one and a half times as likely to grow mushrooms (57 per cent versus 39 per cent), and one and a quarter times as likely to use a motor than the others (82 per cent versus 61 per cent). There is no noticeable relationship, however, between tilapia raising and responsiveness to urban influences. The respective proportions are shown in Table 17.

These relationships between acceptance of urban patterns and decision to use certain innovations remain constant for those on high as well as low economic levels and also for the literate as well as illiterate farmers.

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Contacts Outside the Community

Radio and movies provide indirect contact between the community and the outside world and seem to encourage the acceptance of urban behavior patterns. (See Table 16.) In addition, however, there is direct contact between the community and the capital city. The inhabitants commute to Bangkok to sell their products or to visit. Some go to the city to live for a time, to attend the city's schools, to work as laborers or to serve in the military or police force. For example, about a quarter of the sample (26 per cent) reported that during the year preceding the survey they had been to Bangkok ten or more times. About a third of the sample (35 per cent) have lived in Bangkok, mostly for the purpose of working there. On the other hand, almost half the sample (45 per cent) have never been to the Don Muang Airport; and over two-thirds (69 per cent) have never been to the Annual Agricultural Fair.

One would expect that such direct exposure to the urban life and values of the capital city, for example, might be linked with greater readiness to try out improved methods of agriculture either because exposure to urban life may mean exposure to more information, or, less directly, may mean exposure to the urban values of economic self-advancement and experimentation. And there is, indeed, a relationship between exposure to the capital city and use of the motor. The two factors are not linked for all the residents--the relationship is a conditional one. That is, it is mainly among illiterate farmers where urban contact is associated with readier acceptance of the motor.

TABLE 19. ILLITERATE FARMERS* WHO HAVE GREATER CONTACT WITH THE CITY ARE MORE LIKELY THAN OTHERS TO USE THE MOTOR

"This past year, how many times did you go to Bangkok...?"

Literacy	Never or once (Proportion who own or use the motor)		Twice or more (Proportion who own or use the motor)	
Illiterate	44%	(40)	58%	(51)
Literate	83	(36)	88	(83)

* Male farmers only

In the same way, there is a similar conditional link between use of the motor and wider contacts beyond the horizons of Bang Chan. Visits to the airport and to the agricultural fair, for example, (both centers of contact with urban culture) are associated with use of the motor among illiterate farmers. If the farmer can read and write, on the other hand, he is just

as apt to adopt the motor irrespective of whether he has been in contact with urban culture.

TABLE 20. ILLITERATE FARMERS* WITH WIDER CULTURE CONTACTS ARE MORE LIKELY THAN OTHERS TO USE THE MOTOR

	Illiterate (Proportion using the motor)		Literate (Proportion using the motor)	
Trips to the airport				
None	38%	(40)	86%	(35)
One or more	63	(49)	86	(83)
Visits to the agricultural fair				
None	50%	(67)	85%	(76)
One or more	57	(24)	88	(43)

*Male farmers only

However, no such relationship was discerned between these culture contacts and trying out either fertiliser, tilapia, or mushrooms.

Here again, is evidence to support the hypothesis that contacts with urban culture may act as a substitute for literacy in making the farmer more sophisticated about improving his standard of living and level of production. But the data show that such exposure need not result from direct physical contact with urban centers; it can, instead, be a result of indirect contact. Direct physical contact with urban culture, it turns out is effective in increasing the incidence of acceptance of the more complex innovations only for the illiterate farmers of Bang Chan.

Friendships

The same reasoning which would lead one to expect a higher incidence of acceptance of innovations among those directly exposed to urban contacts would lead to the companion hypothesis: that inhabitants who have a greater degree of internal contacts with their friends and neighbors might tend to try out innovations to a greater extent than those who remain relatively aloof from such social contacts.

The data show that such contacts have a limited connection with acceptance of innovations. The incidence of motor use and tilapia raising is higher, it is true, among persons who report a wider sphere of social circulation; but there is little relation between social contacts and willingness to try out fertiliser or mushrooms.

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"Have you ever been to a clinic or a hospital? (If yes) For what various reasons?

No, never went	37%
Yes	63
For treatment or hospitalization	37*
To bring a patient there	23*
To visit relative(s) or friend(s)	14*
Other reasons	3*

* These responses should not be cumulated since some respondents reported more than one reason for going.

If, indeed, the responses to this question are to be considered a valid index, one would expect respondents who reported having used these facilities also to report a higher incidence of visits to Bangkok, where the available hospitals are located. This expectation is confirmed by the responses to the two relevant questions.

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TABLE 23. INCIDENCE OF TRIPS TO BANGKOK IS HIGHER AMONG RESPONDENTS WHO REPORT VISITS TO CLINIC OR HOSPITAL

"In the past year, how many times did you go to Bangkok...?"	Have you ever been to a clinic or a hospital?"		
	Yes, for treatment (123)	Yes, for other reasons (91)	No (118)
Ten or more times	32%	31%	17%
Two to nine times	40	37	29
Once	13	12	25
Never	15	20	30

The present study now asks what factors are associated with use of modern health facilities.

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Demographic Characteristics of Hospital Users

It is important to answer one question in advance of more detailed analysis. Does an affirmative reply to the question, "Have you ever been to a hospital or clinic" measure need for medical care rather than acceptance of modern health practices.

No direct measure is available of the actual state of health of the survey respondents. But, assuming that older people need medical care more than younger people, then we have an indirect index of whether or not hospital use is higher among people of advanced age. The data show no such relationship.

*178 With more frequent exposure to these media, the link between literacy and use of hospitals or clinics decreases.
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TABLE 30. EXPOSURE TO MASS MEDIA IS LINKED TO HOSPITAL USE, ESPECIALLY AMONG ILLITERATES

	Literate (Proportion reporting use of hospital or clinic)		Illiterate (Proportion reporting use of hospital or clinic)	
Movie Attendance				
High (ten or more times)	78%	(103)	71%	(38)
Low (nine times or less)	64	(56)	48	(111)
Radio Listening				
High (listen "frequently")	81%	(68)	79%	(42)
Low (listen "seldom or never")	66	(86)	48	(122)

*178 Acceptance of Urban Practices
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Table 17 showed that acceptance of certain urban practices was linked to acceptance of the major agricultural innovations. Acceptance of urban practices is also associated with use of clinics and hospitals. Use of modern medicine is significantly higher among those who no longer eat with their hands than among those who do.

TABLE 31. ACCEPTANCE OF URBAN PRACTICES IS LINKED TO USE OF CLINIC AND HOSPITAL FACILITIES

	Customarily Eat With Fork or spoon (84)	Hands (242)
Have you ever been to a clinic or a hospital?		
No, never	28%	39%
Yes, for treatment	48	33
Yes, for other reasons	24	28

*178 Contact Outside Bang Chan
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It has already been reported (see Table 23) that hospital and clinic use is higher for those who, during the past year, have paid more frequent visits to Bangkok. This correlation may seem, at first, spurious, since the main centers of medical care are situated in Bangkok. But the questions asked about contact with Bangkok for the one-year period preceding the survey, and visits to the hospital or clinic over an unspecified time period show

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that the relation of these two indices appears valid. In addition there is further substantiation of the hypothesis that contacts with the world outside Bang Chan are linked with use of modern medical practices: The incidence of such use is significantly higher among those who have visited the airport than among those who have never done so.

TABLE 32. INCIDENCE OF HOSPITAL OR CLINIC USE IS HIGHER AMONG THOSE WHO HAVE VISITED THE AIRPORT

	Trips to the Airport: None (148)	One (50)	Two or more (134)
Have you ever been to a clinic or a hospital?			
No, never	41%	36%	28%
Yes, for treatment	35	40	39
Yes, for other reasons	24	24	33

Moreover, additional support for this contention is found in the higher incidence among hospital and clinic users, of knowledge of the world outside the community.

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It is reasonable to assume that greater contact with the capital city is likely to increase the farmers' awareness of its major public figures. And, indeed, the incidence of hospital and clinic use is highest among those who are able to name correctly certain of Thailand's major public figures, as the Prime Minister and the National Police Chief.

TABLE 33. INCIDENCE OF HOSPITAL OR CLINIC USE IS MORE WIDESPREAD AMONG VILLAGERS WHO ARE AWARE OF THAILAND'S PUBLIC FIGURES

	Have you ever been to a hospital or a clinic?			
	No, Never	Yes, for other reasons	Yes, for treatment	Total 100%
...Who is now the Prime Minister of Thailand ...Would you please tell me his name?				
Names Prime Minister	27%	30%	43%	(192)
Does not know	48	23	29	(140)
...Who is now the Chief of Police of Thailand...Would you please tell me his name:				
Names Chief of Police	23%	31%	46%	(166)
Does not know	49	23	28	(164)

57 125

53. Which of the following six qualities do you feel is the best thing for man: Virile, friendly, educated, rich, religious, lazy? [577]

5.	To be virile	2
6.	To be friendly	31
7.	To be educated	86
8.	To be rich	43
9.	To be religious	136
X.	Not to be lazy	57
Y.	Unascertainable	15
—	No Answer	3

54. Do you drink too frequently, occasionally, seldom, or never? [272]

1.	Often	22
2.	Occasionally	68
3.	Seldom	158
4.	Never	85

55. Do you drink whiskey frequently, occasionally, seldom, or never? [273]

5.	Often	29
6.	Occasionally	73
7.	Seldom	157
8.	Never	74
9.	Unascertainable	—

56.a. In Thailand are many people who smoke opium. Excuse me, during your life have you ever smoked opium, or not? [276]

1.	Yes	45
2.	No	287
3.	Unascertainable	1

b. IF NO: Excuse me, do you think there is anything wrong with smoking opium, or not?

4.	Yes, it is wrong	281
5.	No, it is not wrong	5
6.	Unascertainable	1

c. IF SOMETHING WRONG: What are the various reasons why you think it is wrong?

7.	Bad for health	43
8.	Habit forming	62
9.	Waste of money	220
X.		
Y.	Other reasons, specify_____	40
0.	Unascertainable	

57.a. In the last month, how many times did you go to Nimburi or didn't you go at all? [484]

0.	Did not go at all	67
1.	Once	55
2.	2 to 4 times	120
3.	5 to 9 times	39
4.	10 to 19 times	30
5.	20 times or more	20
6.	Unascertainable	8

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[484]

57.b. IF R DID NOT GO DURING LAST MONTH: How many months ago was the last time you went to Minburi?

7.	Within last 3 months	34
8.	More than 3 months ago	25
9.	Never been to Minburi	1
X.	Unascertainable	3
—	No Answer	4

58. This past year, how many times did you go to Bangkok, or didn't you go at all?

0.	None	71
1.	Once	56
2.	2 to 4 times	90
3.	5 to 9 times	28
4.	10 times or more	87
5.	Unascertainable	1

59. In your life, how many times have you been to Don Muang Airport, or haven't you been there at all?

6.	None	148
7.	Once	58
8.	2 to 4 times	72
9.	5 times or more	52
X.	Unascertainable	3

60. In your life, how many times have you been to the annual agricultural fair or the Agricultural Experimental Station at Bang Khan, or haven't you been there at all?

0.	None	227
1.	Once	47
2.	2 to 4 times	45
3.	5 times or more	14
4.	Unascertainable	

61. In your life, have you ever been beyond the boundaries of Thailand, or not?

X.	Yes	13
Y.	No	318
0.	Unascertainable	2

62.a. Have you ever lived in Bangkok, or not?

1.	Yes	117
2.	No	216
—	Unascertainable	

[464]

b. IF YES: What various duties or jobs did you have when you lived in Bangkok?

4.	Soldier	37
5.	Police	10
6.	Student	22
7.	Artisan	1
8.	Laborer	23
9.	Other, specify _____	33
0.	Unascertainable	2

*128 511 crop year. Except for a few exceptional cases, no new item appeared during the few months that lapsed because rice farmers customarily make their major purchases during the dry season following harvesting time. Special expenses of the 96 continuing families during the period from March, 1948 to February, 1953 were shown in Table 57.

511 Some explanations are necessary for Table 57. In the first place, whereas ordinary household expenses are estimates based on experience of farm operators, these special expenses are actual amounts spent during the specified period of five years. [432] Most of the expenses on land purchases were down payments and subsequent partial payments. Of the four families reporting purchases of household equipment, three bought guns and one bought a sewing machine. [757] [755] All major repairs were for dwellings. The major medical expenses did not include small amounts of money regularly spent on drugs for headache and stomachache or even on delivery of babies which was done by traditional midwives whose fees were nominal. In fact, there were only three cases of major medical expenses. The largest one included Bangkok hospital bills amounting to 14,000 baht. The 36,190 [525] [484] [691] baht of odd expenses included 3,000 baht on gambling(only two operators reported expenses on this item, others admitted win and losses but did not give the amounts), 2,000 baht on purchases of government lotteries which are issued once a week and also on several other occasions, 500 baht on legal prosecution, 300 baht on reward for the

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 331]

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recovery of a boat stolen, 390 baht on "laxity", and 30,000 baht on a trip to Mecca. The gifts to offspring included only gifts presented when offspring left the family to start an independent family of their own.

Special Receipts

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By special receipts we mean major items of receipts in addition to those regularly obtained from crops, labor, rent, and interest on loans extended. These are counterparts of special expenses, and informations about them were obtained from the 96 sample-families in the same manner and almost concurrently. Examples of these special receipts are: sales of land, gold, and major farm equipment; loans obtained, full or partial settlement of loans extended; gifts and remittances; and odd receipts like those from government lottery prizes, running a gambling house, and laxity practices. Special receipts of the 96 sample-families during the period from March, 1948 to February, 1953 were shown in Table 58.

Some of these items of special receipts need explanation. Land sold by two farm operators were sold for cash needed for loan repayment. It is perhaps worth noting that one of these two operators was in the habit of heavy drinking and had been in recent years spending about two thousand baht annually on liquor alone, while the other was in the habit of gambling. All five operators reporting sales of gold gave the reason for the sale that cash was needed to either buy farm equipment (buffaloes) or to repay

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 333]